



NEWS RELEASE

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USDA Completes Third Annual Fort Riley Regional Initiative Meeting

Affordable Housing Made Available To Soldiers & Communities

Topeka, KS – USDA Rural Development and the Fort Riley Command hosted a regional meeting yesterday for community and business leaders to recognizing the three-year anniversary of the USDA - Fort Riley Regional Initiative, and to evaluate local needs associated with the expansion of the Post. The annual conference, held to support the ongoing Initiative between USDA and Fort Riley created to support expanded affordable housing and other community development opportunities, was sponsored by the Junction City-Geary County Military Affairs Council.

"We are very impressed with the interest and enthusiasm shown during today's regional meeting. The Agency's USDA - Fort Riley Regional Initiative provides an excellent opportunity to assist Soldiers moving to the region, along with helping communities benefiting from the Fort Riley expansion to create more affordable housing opportunities and enhancing their local services. Whether it be improving local housing or upgrading community projects such as health care services, USDA Rural Development is positioned to assist in this very important Kansas economic development opportunity," commented State Director Banks.

Mark Edwards, Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army complimented USDA Rural Development for their strong partnership between the Agency, Fort Riley, and the community.

USDA Rural Development's 'Fort Riley Regional Initiative', created as a result of the historic Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Agency and Ft. Riley on June 27, 2005, has resulted in strong partnerships with the Housing Service Office, ACS Relocation Readiness, and the Retirement Services Office. Eighteen Kansas communities have benefited from the Initiative. USDA has approved 412 single-family housing loans totaling \$39.7 million in affordable homeownership financing.

In his remarks, Banks also thanked Linda Hoeffner, Fort Riley Deputy Garrison Commander, for assisting the Agency in hosting the annual meeting, and Denise Ott of the Junction City-Geary County Military Affairs Council for sponsoring the event. Banks also thanked the Kansas Congressional Delegation, especially U.S. Senators Roberts and Brownback and Congressmen Moran and Boyda, for supporting USDA's Initiative and programming efforts to benefit Kansas.

Additional information regarding USDA Rural Development's 'Fort Riley Regional Initiative' can be obtained by contacting the Agency's Manhattan office at 785-776-7582 (extension #4).

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs that support increasing economic opportunities and enhancing the quality of life for rural Americans. USDA Rural Development provides equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure in rural America. Since 2001, USDA Rural Development has delivered over \$1.2 billion to Kansans covering all Agency programs, supporting well over \$6 billion in future economic development for the Sunflower State. For additional information regarding all USDA Rural Development programs, contact the Agency at 785-271-2700 or visit the Agency's Kansas website at www.rurdev.usda.gov/ks

USDA Rural Development – Committed to the future of rural communities.

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